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THE RED SEA SLAVE-TRADE.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

It is astonishing, considering the great interest felt in this country on the subject of the slave-trade, how little is known of the most revolting side of the question, and how little is done to attempt its suppression. The general idea seems to be that the slave-trade carried on between the east coast of Africa and the Persian Gulf is the only one worthy of our consideration, and that if a certain number of our men-of-war patrol the coast from Magadoxa to Mozambique during the south-east monsoon, and occasionally make a capture, England has done all that need be done to prevent the traffic.

Now the horrors of this East African trade, with its murderous raids on defenceless tribes, its cruel march through the desert and jungle, and its terrible voyage of six weeks or more in the crowded hold of a slave-dhow, have often been described, and are sufficient in all conscience to make every man with ordinary feelings of humanity anxious to do all that lies in his power for their mitigation; but the miseries end with the voyage, and when once a slave has been bought in the market, his life is seldom an unhappy one. The Persians and Arabs are good masters, and treat their slaves well and kindly so long as they do their work, providing them with good food and such clothes as they require; allowing them to marry, and considering them as members of their own families.

But the fate of the unfortunate victims of the Red Sea Slave-trade is a very different one. It is true they are spared the six weeks' voyage, as the run across the Red Sea occupies only from six to thirty-six hours; but the hardships which they undergo in the raid and on the march are fully as great as those endured by the slaves brought from the east coast, and are augmented by the fact that they are all children of tender years. For this revolting traffic is kept up for the purpose of supplying the harems of the

wealthier classes of Turkey and Arabia with children of both sexes, and involves cruelties unspeakable. Thirty-seven children only were released at Aden in the year 1889, and of these, eleven were girls. Though the eldest could not have been more than twelve, and the youngest barely seven years of age, every one of these infants had suffered shocking and indescribable cruelties, and they all had to be sent to the hospital at Aden. There, needless to say, they received every kindness, and were treated with the greatest skill; but the youngest child died shortly after her admittance, literally murdered by the inhuman cruelties referred to. The treatment to which the boys had been subjected was equally cruel.

It must not be supposed that this traffic is carried on on a small scale. The political officers at Aden reckon that from two to five thousand children are taken across the Red Sea for this accursed purpose every year, and yet the market is never glutted.

If the law promulgated at Constantinople on the 15th December by the Turkish Government, and sanctioned by Imperial Iradé, is intended to be strictly enforced, a deadly blow has been struck at this traffic; but I fear that those who best know the Turkish nation will be the most doubtful of their *bona fides* in the matter. Slavery itself has the direct sanction of the Koran, and the horrible practices for which the Red Sea traffic provides victims are not looked upon in Turkey and Arabia with any of the disgust which they excite in the minds of the people of civilised countries.

If Article 7 of the Iradé were obeyed in the way that a similar law would be by civil functionaries of Western nations, there would be an end of the traffic at once, as all the markets are held on the western coast of Arabia, where the authority of the Sultan is undisputed; but this is hardly to be expected, as the great officials on this coast are—almost without exception—interested in the traffic themselves; if not actually as owners or consignees of the vessels,

most certainly as customers of the slave-dealers, to whose misdeeds they are consequently conveniently blind. However, the *Irade* immensely strengthens the hands of those nations who are really in earnest about putting a stop to this traffic, and few Englishmen would care to believe that their own country was not so. And yet to cope with it we have at Aden only one small gun-vessel. The disturbed state of our possessions on the Somali coast renders it necessary that Aden should never be left without a man-of-war for more than a very few days, so the only way in which the senior naval officer can contend with the slave-trade is by detaching the greater number of the boats belonging to his ship to cruise on the coasts where slaves may be expected to be embarked or landed.

The boats that can be spared are generally three in number—one steam-cutter, one ten-oared sailing-cutter, and one five-oared whaler. They are all the same length—twenty-five feet, and in them from seven to fifteen full-grown men have to live and have their being during the hottest time of the year in the Red Sea. They are all open boats, and far from safe in the heavy seas and sudden squalls which so frequently occur in the Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb and the southern part of the Red Sea. They are far inferior in speed to the native vessels, and the officers in charge have barely time to begin to learn something of the local currents, &c.—with which the slave-traders are of course intimately acquainted—before it becomes necessary to send them to some cooler part of the station, if, indeed, they have not so broken down in health under the continuous work, anxiety, and exposure to the terrible heat as to be forced to return to England to recover their strength.

The slaves are brought in caravans from far inland, and marched to the coast to be embarked, the leader of the caravan choosing as a rule some point between Zeilah and Asab Bay for his embarkation. The Gulf of Tajurah, being under French influence, is a favourite locality for this purpose, as the French do not interfere with the trade in any way, even if they do not directly encourage it. As we have no treaty with France on the subject of the slave-trade, our cruisers cannot stop vessels flying that flag except for the purpose of verifying their right to fly it, and even that cannot be done in sight of a French man-of-war or of a French flag flying on shore. Consequently, it is a very common thing to see a dhow—when chased by an English man-of-war's boat—hoist French colours and run in for Obokh, in sight of which place they know that English cruisers cannot, and French cruisers will not interfere with them.

From the Gulf of Tajurah they hug the African coast until past Roheita, when they are generally able to lay up to the northward of Perim, and strike the Arabian coast, and beat up for Jeddah. They never make longer stretches off shore than are absolutely necessary, so as to be always able to run in shore and land their cargoes if there are any signs of danger. Their object is always to reach Jeddah, if possible, as it is there that the great market is held at which the pilgrims buy slaves to take back with them on their return from Mecca. But should there be danger either from the weather or the proximity

of hostile cruisers, they will land their cargoes anywhere to the northward of Perim and march them up to Jeddah inland. The distance across the Red Sea being so small, vessels are not built specially for this trade, as they are for that on the east coast; but any passing fishing-boats are requisitioned by the leader of the caravan, and the passages of the slaves are paid for at the rate of seven dollars a head when they are landed on the coast of Arabia.

The sharpest possible lookout is kept on the cruising-boats, and all their motions are closely watched. The slavers know well that these boats are dependent on a depot for their supplies of coal and water, and that they can never be either very long or very far away from it, and their every movement is always reported by some of the numerous canoes whose occupants make their living by fishing in the Red Sea. The caravans are frequently kept for many weeks on the coast before a favourable opportunity occurs for embarking the slaves. Khor Anjar, Ras Siyân, and Roheita are also favourite places for the caravans, as dhows can as a rule fetch to the northward of Perim even from Khor Anjar.

It is little use to watch the points of embarkation, because the slave-owners simply remain quiescent when they know that the cruisers are off the coast. Even if they have engaged vessels to take their slaves, they make some signal from the shore, on seeing which the vessels resume their ordinary occupations, and when searched, have nothing to show that they had contemplated engaging in any but lawful business. The only chance of catching them is by a strict and careful blockade of the coast on which the disembarkation takes place, and this—with the means at present at the disposal of the naval officers—is possible only to a very limited extent. A small steam-cutter able to steam at the outside seven knots in smooth water, and carrying coal enough for twelve hours' continuous steaming at full speed, can be very easily located by those whose very existence depends upon evading her, and the sailing-boats may be said to be absolutely useless.

With four—or still better six—powerful steam-launches, such as those known in the navy as picket-boats, a really efficient blockade of the Arabian coast could be maintained. Steaming twelve knots with ease, and carrying coal enough for four days' steaming at full speed, these little craft could watch the coast so thoroughly that no vessel could land at any point without being intercepted, while their superior accommodation would render life more bearable for the officers and men employed in them, and would largely diminish the number of invalids sent home from this station.

The Italians during the past year have been making strenuous efforts to destroy this trade, and have co-operated with us most heartily by giving us information when they obtained it from their native agents at or near Massowah. They kept three men-of-war constantly cruising during the season of the pilgrimage, and bought and manned native vessels, which cruised separately in the same way as the boats of our own men-of-war. They would certainly join with readiness in any scheme of blockade that was proposed by our Government, and their headquarters at

Massowah would form an admirable link between our two stations of Perim and Suakim.

No place could be better adapted for the base of operations of a flotilla such as I have suggested than the island of Perim. It absolutely commands the Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb, so that given efficient boats and officers whose hearts were in the work—and I venture to think that there would be no lack of these latter if they were asked for—it would be impossible for any vessel to enter the Red Sea from the southward without undergoing inspection. The island is in the hands of the Perim Coal Company, who have always shown the greatest courtesy to naval officers employed in the suppression of the slave-trade. It was the headquarters of the boats of H.M.S. *Ranger* last year, and they were assisted by the company in every possible way. Their factory was always at their disposal for any repairs the boats might require, and their engineers would at any time cheerfully work night and day to make good any defects that would have prevented the boats from going to sea, while it would be impossible to over-estimate the hospitality and kindness always shown by the manager and his subordinates to the officers and boats' crews. The surgeon of the company also was always ready to give them the benefit of his skill and attention whenever it was required; and the fact that the company always keeps an experienced and able medical practitioner in its employ on the island, adds greatly to its value as a boat-cruising centre.

The launches should be altogether independent of the man-of-war at Aden, and their duty should be the suppression of the slave-trade and nothing else. In this way the trade could be practically put an end to as long as the blockade of the Arabian coast was maintained; but the great danger would be the withdrawal of the boats as soon as the trade showed signs of material diminution. This was done in the case of the *London*, stationed at Zanzibar for the suppression of the slave-trade on the east coast of Africa. As soon as a year came in which few captures were made, it was concluded that the slave-trade was finally crushed, and the vessel was withdrawn, when the trade at once revived with even more than its original vigour. To do any good, the trade must be kept down with a strong hand for enough years for the people to learn to do without slaves, and so stop the demand.

It seems curious that the king of Abyssinia does not take more active steps for the protection of his subjects, as most of these children are taken from his dominions; but I hope that was partly the object of the Abyssinian embassy which visited Zeilah in November last.

The question as to whether the employment of adult negroes as slaves for manual labour is a good or a bad thing for them is one that has been much discussed in the past; but there can be no two ways of looking at the case of these unfortunate children, and all Europe should rise and insist that such a scandal should cease. The new Treaty between England and Italy provides that vessels carrying slaves under their flags should be treated as pirates, and surely vessels under any flag whatsoever should be so treated when they are caught carrying children as slaves for such a traffic as this. But the Turkish government seems to consider

one to two years' imprisonment an adequate punishment; and the French government apparently thinks the offence too trivial to require legislating for; while we who have always led the way in the endeavour to put down slavery in every form, content ourselves with making what may be called a nominal protest against the most horrible side of it, and are forced to acknowledge that the Italians have shown treble the zeal and earnestness that we have.

It is high time that this state of affairs should cease, and that England should once more resume her proud position as champion of the oppressed; and there never was a more favourable time than the present for commencing an attack upon this abominable trade and carrying it to a satisfactory conclusion.

Bab-el-Mandeb means 'the gate of tears,' and the name must have fearful significance for some of these poor children; but if Perim—which might be called the hinges of the gate—is made the headquarters of a flotilla of English boats for the purpose of releasing the slaves, the name of the Strait may be altered to 'the gate of the drying of tears.'

MY SHIPMATE LOUISE.

THE ROMANCE OF A WRECK.

By W. CLARK RUSSELL,

Author of the *Wreck of the Grosvenor*, etc.

CHAPTER XIV.—CRABB.

THE atmosphere was still red with the sunset, though the luminary was below the horizon, and there was plenty of light to see by. An extraordinary shout went up from amongst the men at the sight of Crabb, as he leapt out of the hatch in the heart of the little cloud of smoke. Those who were on the side of the deck on to which he jumped recoiled with a positive roar of horror and fright, one or two of them capsizing and rolling over and over away from the hatch, as though they were in too great a hurry to escape to find time to get upon their legs.

I very well remember feeling the blood desert my cheek, whilst my heart seemed to come to a stand, and my breathing grew difficult at the apparition of the fellow. *Crabb!* Why, I had seen him lying dead in his bunk! I had heard of him as lying stitched up in a hammock on this very fore-hatch! I had beheld that same hammock flash overboard, and I had watched it lifting and frisking away astern! Who, then, was yonder hideous creature that had jumped in hobgoblin fashion out of the hold? Could he be the buried Crabb himself?

There is no lack of things to frighten people withal in this world; but I cannot conceive of any shock comparable to the instant consternation felt by a man who meets another of whose death he is profoundly assured, and whom he has been thinking of as a corpse, dead and buried, for any number of days gone by. The general horror, the prodigious universal amazement which held the mate and me and others amongst us

speechless and motionless, as though we had been blasted and withered up by some electric bolt from heaven, scarcely endured a minute; yet by that handful of seconds was the picture of this amazing incident framed. I see Crabb now as he let fall his arm from his face when his fit of choking coughing ceased; and I recall the blind wild look of his distorted eyes, as he slowly turned his countenance round, as though the mild evening light was violently oppressive to his vision after the days of blackness passed in the hold. His repulsive countenance was dark with dirt and grime. I observed many scratches upon his arms, which were naked to the elbows, as though he were fresh from squeezing and boring through some ugly jagged intricacies of stowed commodities. His shirt hung in rags upon him; there were many rents in his loose trousers; and there was blood upon his exposed chest, from a wound seemingly made by the sharp head of a nail or some edge of iron-sheathed case.

'Seize that man, bo'sun,' suddenly roared Mr Prance, leaping out of his benumbed condition of astonishment in a way to make one think of a bull sweeping out through a hedge: 'handcuff him, and shut him up in your berth for the present. Get the head-pump rigged—the hose passed along—Jump for buckets, and stand by to pass them down.'

The powerful hand of the boatswain closed like a vice upon Crabb's neck. I thought to see a struggle, but the ugly sailor seemed weak and dazed, and stepped passively to the boatswain's berth into which my friend shot him, following and closing the door, to conceal, I suppose, the operation of manaculating the man from the eyes of the half-stupefied Jacks.

Half-stupefied, I say: but the orders of the mate were like the flourish of some magic wand over each man. There was a headlong rush, though with something of discipline in the hurry of it too, at the chief-officer's command. Smoke was draining through the open hatch, floating up thinly and lazily, though it was a thing to make one hold one's breath, not knowing but that the next vomit might prove a thicker, darker coil, with a lightning-like reddening of the base of it to the flicker of some deep-down tongue of flame. Fire at sea! Ah, great God! Out of the mere thought of it will come the spirit of the fleetest runner into the laziest and most lifeless shanks!

The mate sprang on top of the cases stowed level with the lower edges of the hold with a cry for men to follow him. The interior was the fore-part of the 'tweendecks, bulkheaded off some little distance before the mainmast, and filled with light, easily-handled goods. The hatch conducting to the ship's hold lay closed immediately under these few tons of freight in a line with the yawning square into which Mr Prance had sprung. Where was the fire? If in the lower hold, then heaven help us! I glanced aft and saw the captain hastily walking forward. The passengers had come together in a crowd, and were staring with pale faces from the head of the poop ladder. Old Keeling was perfectly cool. He asked no questions, made no fuss, simply came to the side of the hatch, saw Mr Prance and a gang of men at work breaking out the cargo, and stood watching, never hindering

the people's labour by a question. His keen seaward eye took in everything in a breath. One needed but to watch his face to see *that*. The placidity of the fine old fellow was a magnificent influence. In an incredibly short space of time, the captain meanwhile never once opening his lips, the head pump was rigged, the hose trailed along and pointed ready, a number of seamen were standing in files with buckets ranged along all prepared for drawing water and passing it to the hatchway with the swiftest expedition. I cannot express the wonderful encouragement the heart found in this silence alone. The captain trusted his chief-mate, saw that he exactly knew what to do, and stood by as a spectator, with just one look of approval at his quiet, resolute, deep-breathing ranks of seamen awaiting orders.

Once he turned his purple face, and observing Mr Johnson and Mr Emmett and one or two others nervously edging their way forwards, he beckoned with a long forefinger to a boatswain's mate and said in a low voice: 'Drive those gentlemen aft on to the poop, and see that none of the passengers leaves it.' He glanced at me once, but said nothing, possibly because he had found me looking on when he arrived.

All as tranquilly as though the job was no more than the mere breaking-out of a few boxes of passengers' luggage, the work of removing the cargo so as to get at the fire proceeded. The smoke continued to steal stealthily up. The contents of the cases I do not know, but they were light enough to be lifted easily. A number of them were got on deck. The mate and Mr Cocker—who had arrived from his cabin shortly after the captain had come—headed the gang of workers, and rapidly disappeared in the lanes they opened.

'Here it is!' at last came a muffled shout.

Mr Cocker coming out of a dark hole like a rat, with the perspiration streaming from him as though a bucket of oil had been capsized over his head, sang out for the hose to be overhauled and the pump to be worked.

'Have you discovered the fire, sir?' said the captain, calling down to him in such a collected voice as he would have used in requesting a passenger to take wine with him.

'Yes, sir. It is a small affair. The hose will suffice I think, sir.'

An instant after, the clanking of the plied pump was to be heard along with the sound of water steadily gushing, followed by a cloud of steam, which quickly vanished. A quarter of an hour later the mate came up black as a chimney-sweep. He touched his cap to the captain and simply said: 'The fire's out, sir.'

'What was it, Mr Prance?'

'A bale of blankets, sir.'

'Can you guess how it originated?'

'I expect that the man Crabb'—— began the mate.

The captain started and stared.

'The man Crabb,' continued Mr Prance, 'whom we imagined dead and buried, sir, has been skulking in the hold'—old Keeling frowned with amazement—'and I have no doubt he fired the bale whilst lighting his pipe.'

'Crabb in the hold!' cried the skipper; 'do you speak of the man whom we buried, sir?'

'The same, sir,' answered Mr Prance.

Old Keeling gazed about him with a gaping face. 'But he died, sir, and was buried,' he exclaimed. 'I read the funeral service over him, and saw, sir—Mr Prance, I saw with my own eyes the hammock fall from the grating after it had been tilted.'

The chief-officer said something in reply which I did not catch, owing to the noise amongst the men who were yet in the hold and the talk of the sailors round about. He then walked to the boatswain's berth, followed by the captain, that old Marline-spike's eyes might bear witness to the assurance that the Crabb who had leapt up out of the fore-hatch in a smother of smoke was the same Crabb who had been solemnly interred over the ship's side some weeks before.

Mr Cocker came wriggling out of the hold and got on to the deck alongside of me to superintend the restowal of the broken-out goods.

'Is the fire out?' I asked.

'Black out,' he answered. 'It was no fire, to speak truly of it, Mr Dugdale. A top bale of blankets or some such stuff was smouldering in about the circle of a five-shilling piece—a little ring eating slowly inwards, but throwing out smoke enough to furnish forth a volcano for a stage-scene. A beastly smell! not to speak of some of the stuff down there being as blackening as a shoe-polisher's brushes.' Here he looked at the palms of his hands, which were only a little more grimy than his face.—'But what's this I hear about Crabb? Has the dead sailor come to life again?'

'He's yonder,' said I, nodding towards the boatswain's berth, which the captain and mate had entered, closing the door after them: 'you'll need to see to believe. Time was that when a man was dropped over a ship's side with a cannon-ball at his feet he was as dead as if his brains were out. D'ye remember, Mr Cocker, how that hammock went floating astern, as if there were less than a dead sailor in it, though something more than nothing? There's been some stealthy diabolical scheme here, depend upon it. We may yet find out that the ship wasn't scuttled because the ugly rogue hadn't time to pierce through the lower hatch before he set the vessel on fire.'

'But he was a dead man, sir; Hemmeridge saw him dead,' cried Cocker, eyeing me with an inimitable air of astonishment.

'Ay,' said I, 'dead as the bones of a mummy. But he's *there* all the same,' I added, pointing to the fore-castle cabin, 'as alive as you or I, and capable, I daresay, of kicking after a little.'

At this moment the mate put his head out of the boatswain's berth and called to Mr Cocker, on which I walked leisurely aft, with amazement in me growing, and scarcely capable of realising the truth of what I had seen.

The passengers were still crowding the fore-part of the poop, peering and eagerly talking, but in subdued voices, with Colonel Bannister moving angrily amongst them, and the boatswain's mate sentinelling the foot of the ladder.

'Oh, Mr Dugdale,' cried Mrs Radcliffe, leaning over the rail and crying down her question with a pecking motion of her head; 'is the fire out, do you know? Are we safe?'

'The fire is out, madam,' I replied, lifting my hat; 'and the ship is as safe this minute as ever

she was in the Thames. Captain Keeling will, I have no doubt, be here very shortly to reassure you.'

Miss Temple, towering half a head above her aunt, looked down at me with an air of imperious questioning in her face. There was a hot scarlet blush all along the west, yet with power enough in its illumination to render each face of the crowd above quite distinguishable against the tender shadow stealing from the east into the air, and I could see an eagerness in the girl's full, dark, glowing, and steadfast gaze to warrant me the honour of a conversation with her if I chose to ascend the ladder. But just then Hemmeridge came out of the cuddy on to the quarter-deck with just the hint of a stagger in his walk. His eyes showed that he was only just awake, and his hair that he had run out of his cabin in a hurry.

'I say, Dugdale,' he exclaimed, 'what's been the matter, hey? Fire, is it? And the steward tells me that Crabb has come back. Has the man gone mad?'

'There's been a fire,' said I, 'and Crabb has come back.'

Here Cocker came along the deck.

'Doctor, the captain wants you.'

'Where is he?'

'Come along; I'll take you to him,' said the second mate, running his eye over Hemmeridge's figure with a half-look on at me full of meaning in it.

They walked forward, the doctor a trifle unsteady in his gait, I thought.

I went to my berth for some tobacco; I stayed a short time below, and when I returned, the last scar of sunset was gone. The west was a liquid violet darkness trembling with stars, and the ship was floating through the darkness of the night, which in these latitudes follows swiftly upon the heels of the departing day. Captain Keeling had come aft, and was standing in the midst of a crowd of passengers answering questions, and soothing the women, who were snapping inquiries in whole volleys, their voices threaded by tremors and shrill with nerves. Mr Prance, who had found time to cleanse himself, was on deck in charge of the ship. All was hushed forwards. Against the stars twinkling over the line of the fore-castle rail under the foot of the foresail, that slowly lifted and fell to the heave of the ship, I could distinguish the outlines of sailors moving here and there in twos and threes. A subdued hoarse growling of voices came out of the block of darkness round about the galley and the long-boat, where were gathered a number of men, doubtlessly discoursing on the marvellous incident of the evening. The glittering brilliants in the sky winked like dewdrops along the black edge of the spars and at the extremity of the yardarms; and spite of the voices of the people aft and of the mutterings forward, so deep was the ocean hush up aloft that again and again the sound of the delicate night-breeze, breathing lightly into the visionary spaces of the sails, would fall like a sigh upon the ear.

'An exciting piece of work, Mr Prance,' said I, stepping to his side, 'taking it from the start to the close.'

'Why, yes,' he answered. 'The passengers

will not be wanting in experiences to relate when they get ashore. Enough has happened yesterday and to-day, in the way of excitement, I mean, to last out an ordinary voyage, though it were as long as one of Captain Cook's.

'What has Hemmeridge to say about this business of Crabb, do you know?' I asked.

'You will keep the news to yourself, if you please,' he answered; 'but I don't mind telling you that he's under arrest—that is to say, he has to consider himself so.'

'What for?' I asked, greatly astonished.

'Why, Mr Dugdale,' said he, slowly looking round, to make sure that the coast was clear, 'you may easily guess that this business of the scoundrel Crabb—an old pirate, as I remember telling you—signifies a very deep-laid plot, an atrociously ingenious conspiracy.'

'I supposed that at once,' said I.

'The fellow Crabb feigned to be dead,' he continued. 'A sham it must have been, otherwise he wouldn't be in irons yonder. Now, are we to believe that Hemmeridge can't distinguish between death and life? He reports the man dead to the captain. The fellow is stitched up; but, as we have since ascertained, a prepared hammock is substituted for the one that conceals his remains, and we bury maybe some clump of wood. This is the part Captain Keeling least likes, I think. He is a pious old gentleman, and his horror when'—He checked himself with a cough, and a sound on top of it like a smothered laugh, as though he enjoyed some fancy in his mind, but durst not be too candid, since it was the captain he talked about.

'It is assumed,' said I, 'that Hemmeridge represented Crabb as dead knowing him to be alive?'—He nodded.—'What will have been the project?' I continued, shaping out the truth as, bit by bit, it formed itself in my head. 'Robbery, of course. Ay, Mr Prance, that will have been it. Crabb is to be smuggled into the hold, the notion throughout the ship being that he is dead and overboard; and when in the hold'—I stopped.

'Well,' said he with a shrug of his shoulders, 'there's the mail-room. What else? With a parcel of diamonds in it worth seventy thousand pounds, not to speak of money, jewelry, and other precious matters.'

'By heavens! did any man ever hear the like of such a plot?' cried I; 'and Hemmeridge is suspected as a confederate?'

'We shall see, we shall see,' he answered.

'Just tell me this, Mr Prance,' I exclaimed, thirsty with curiosity, 'who are the others involved? Somebody must have shifted Crabb's remains.'

'The sailmaker is in irons,' said he.

'Yes! I might have sworn it! Why is it that the high Roman nose of that chap has haunted my recollection of the ghastly appearance Mr Crabb presented at every recurrence of my mind to the loathsome picture?'

He slightly started, and I could see him eyeing me earnestly.

'By the way,' he exclaimed, 'now that I think of it, Hemmeridge showed Crabb's body to you, didn't he?'

'Certainly he did,' I responded.

'Well, it will give the doctor a chance,' said

he, as though thinking aloud; and so saying he made some steps in the direction of the captain, and I went down on the quarter-deck to blow a cloud and muse upon the matters he had filled my mind with.

SENSATION IN LOW FORMS OF LIFE.

If the green scum which accumulates on roofing-tiles and other exposed surfaces be washed off and the water examined under a microscope, it will be found to teem with an organism either entirely green or partly green and red. This organism is known as the *Protococcus* (that is, 'first berry'), and is one of the lowest and simplest forms of true plant-life. Its colour indicates the presence of chlorophyll, and consequently the power of assimilating carbon from the carbonic acid of the atmosphere—one of the marks of a true plant. The chief end of the *protococcus*' life seems to be to multiply, and this it accomplishes by dividing itself in pieces, each piece forming a new individual, which in turn divides up, to form a further crop. This method of reproduction is common in the lowest forms of life, and is known as *fission*, or splitting off. Little can be said about the inner life of the *protococcus*; but from the fact that the rapidity with which it multiplies is affected by conditions external to itself, it may be assumed that these conditions in some way or other influence the vitality of the organism. This is perhaps as much as can be said about sensation in this lowly form of life; yet, while occupying a position very near the bottom of the scale, the *protococcus* is not without a touch of romance. When Arctic or Alpine travellers meet with what they describe as 'red snows,' it is nothing more nor less than the humble but hardy *protococcus* flourishing and multiplying on the surface of the virgin snow.

From one of the lowest of plants to one of the lowest of animals is but a short step, and in some roadside ditch or stagnant pool the *Amœba* finds a home. The *amœba* is a mere speck of jelly-looking matter, possessing neither structure nor organisation. When this simple matter is found in connection with life, whether plant or animal, it is known as protoplasm; and protoplasm is found at the beginning of every form of life, from the lowest plant to man himself. The *amœba* is ever changing its form (hence its name, which means 'change'), and by pushing out finger-looking processes is able to move about through the water. It seems also to be able in some mysterious way to avoid collisions which might be disastrous to itself. When a smaller organism comes against the surface of the *amœba*, a contraction of the protoplasm takes place, and an opening is made where the organism struck. Soon the luckless wanderer is engulfed in the body of the *amœba*, and digested, so far as it will digest, to form new protoplasm. When the *amœba*, whose sense of hunger never seems to fail, is waxing too fat for its own comfort, the protruding fingers now and again drop off, and setting up on their own account as new individuals, repeat the life of the parent. From the foregoing, it will be seen that the *amœba* is to a considerable extent alive to what is going on around it, and were its structure unknown, it might be affirmed that it possessed the special

senses of at least touch and sight. But it does not possess the ghost of any sense-organ. The contraction of the amoeba when struck by another body resembles the contraction of muscular tissue under sudden irritation; but again, the amoeba has no tissue of any kind. The parting with pieces of itself would seem to be a deliberative act. Yet the amoeba has no nerve or brain centre where such deliberation could be carried on.

Notwithstanding all these negations, the fact still remains that the amoeba is sensitive to outside conditions, and some term or terms are required to describe this particular form of sensitivity. Biologists appear to be agreed that the contractile motion of the amoeba is sufficiently described under the term 'irritability' or 'excitability,' and the other movements are covered by the term 'discrimination.' These terms may to a certain extent be satisfactory; but their value will be better understood when actions similar to that of the amoeba are considered in one or two of the higher classes of plants. When a tiny insect alights on certain parts of such plants as the sundew or Venus's fly-trap, a contractile movement is at once set up, which usually costs the luckless insect its life. If irritated a few times by the point of a pencil or a sharp instrument, the plants seem to discover the fraud, and cease to act. Drops of rain falling with presumably greater force than that exerted by the alighting of an insect, produce no effect. The sundew, moreover, is so sensitive to the presence of ammonia, that it will indicate its presence in a solution so dilute as to be beyond the recognition of the ordinary laboratory tests.

From the behaviour of these plants it might be surmised that they possess in some measure the special senses of touch and taste, and in the case of the sundew, also smell, to say nothing of an intelligence to make use of these senses. But the anatomy of the sundew and Venus's fly-trap shows neither nerve nor muscle, far less any special organs of sense. As with the amoeba, biologists write down the whole phenomena as due to 'irritability' and 'discrimination.' These terms no doubt form a very convenient bridge for getting over such problems as the movements of plants; but they evidently fall short of explaining the phenomena.

The amoeba being to all intents a one-celled animal, it is comparatively easy to understand that an act of irritation should affect the whole mass; but in the case of the sensitive plants, where the cells directly acted upon have to pass the irritation on to some millions of other cells, the satisfactoriness of the term 'irritability' is not quite so apparent. Again, the term 'discrimination' no doubt pretty accurately describes the actions of the sensitive plants in closing on an insect which will form food, and refusing to close repeatedly at the touch of a pencil. But while it describes what takes place, it explains nothing; and one cannot help thinking that there is a further field for discovery behind these convenient but unsatisfactory terms.

The second division in the scale of animal life includes the great family of sponges. The sponge differs from the amoeba in being composed of many cells, instead of a single one, and presents the first indications of division of labour in the animal kingdom. One set of cells are told off to look

after the supplies, while another set see to the digesting and building-up of material.

When first cast on its own resources, the young sponge is a small slimy body covered with minute hairs or lashes, by the movement of which it roams about in perfect freedom. By-and-by the sponging seems to grow tired of a roving life; or perhaps the continual dread of being swallowed by one of its enemies more than counterbalances all the joy of its youthful pleasures. At all events it manifests a desire for 'settling down;' and some root-looking processes having meanwhile appeared at one end of its body, it attaches itself by these to the spot where it is to spend the remainder of its days. This is usually the solid rock; but it may be the surface of a pebble, or the back of a crustacean. By some newly-acquired vital power, the settled-down sponge now commences to separate lime or flinty material, either from its food or directly from the sea; and the fibrous structure, characteristic of the mature sponge, soon begins to appear. The lashes which have hitherto been used round the outside for catching food are now drawn inside, just when one would imagine that their presence outside would be all the more required for the increasing wants of the growing sponge. But the lashes have only been removed to a position of greater safety, not of less usefulness. Chambers are formed at intervals in the minute canals which everywhere irrigate the growing fibrous structure, and in these lies the future work of the lashes. By a vigorous concerted movement of all the lashes in the various chambers, water is drawn in through the small canals, and passed on to a larger canal in the centre, which opens to the top, and is there emitted with some force. By this arrangement food is drawn in all around the sponge, and as far as possible caught and digested by the slimy material. Should an extra-lively organism be drawn in and show an inclination to fight, the fibrous matter acts as a protection; and the would-be fighter must either be content to pass on and be ejected by the funnel, or run the risk of being absorbed in the digestive slime, and thus end its fighting days for ever.

Although the fibres of an ordinary sponge do not appear to form any regular design in their structure, there is a species known to flourish in the neighbourhood of the Philippine Islands which does produce a sponge of remarkable beauty and design. This production is known as Venus's flower-basket, and so exquisitely is the pattern worked out that it may fitly be compared to the finest lace.

From the few features of sponge-life just mentioned, it seems difficult to believe that the sponge can display so much apparent intelligence without any organs of special sense. Specially wonderful is it to contemplate the fairy-looking lacework of Venus's flower-basket, and know that it has been constructed by an organism possessing not even the most rudimentary form of eyes.

The settling-down of the free swimming sponging might possibly be induced by the slimy matter acquiring a more solid, and consequently heavier condition, at the end by which it ultimately becomes attached. The preference for solid rock as a permanent place of abode might be accounted for simply by the prevalence of rock in the parts of the sea where sponge-life abounds. But the

formation of small canals, leading to larger ones which ultimately open to the outside, the small chambers, with the movement of the lashes, causing a current through the whole system, betokens an adaptation of means to ends that can scarcely be conceived of without associating with it a certain amount of intelligence. The sponge, however, possesses no nervous system or any of the features on which intelligence is usually understood to depend. Again, the terms 'irritability' and 'discrimination' seem quite inadequate to meet the case, and recourse is had with some reluctance to the doctrine of 'natural selection,' or the 'survival of the fittest.' This theory teaches that in some bygone age all sponges perished except a few who conformed to the mode of life that obtains with sponges of the present day. Of the families of these few, only those survived who conformed to the same rule of life. With each succeeding generation the tendency to conform would become stronger, until now the tendency to perform certain operations is transmitted from one generation to another, just as truly as the individuality itself. Granting that this is the true explanation of the sponge's mode of life, the question arises, How did the first sponge manage to strike out this line of conduct? If we assume that the first sponge had a dispensation of some special power—whatever name it might be called by—could the same power not be granted to every succeeding generation? As in the case of the sensitive plants already referred to, there seems to be some mystery in the life-history of the sponge which biologists have not yet solved, and possibly never will.

The next group to the sponges in the animal scale includes the sea-anemones and jelly-fishes, and it is in these curious creatures that the first appearance of a rudimentary nervous system and organs of special sense are found to appear. To these, however, we may revert on a future occasion.

JULIUS VERNON:

A STORY OF HYDE PARK.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE JULLARAD TRAGEDY.'

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN Holmes returned with the child to Kensington, Mrs Burton was still absent from home, which was a very remarkable fact in regard to that domesticated little woman, and one which the good-humoured neighbour who resumed charge of Nellie declared unprecedented. But no doubt she conjectured Mrs Burton had met her husband and was waiting to come home with him.

To some extent this was the case, for, as Frank Holmes gave little Nellie a parting kiss and a sixpence, Burton and his wife were seen coming up the street. He was glad to meet Burton, in order to obtain from him confirmation of the news brought by Mr Clayton.

The story was an extraordinary one, and Mrs Burton, blushing and proud, was the heroine of it. The little woman would hardly have consented to the death of a dog, if it had bitten her child; but she had put the last rivet in Claude Faune's fate without a qualm. This was because she had no thought of that unfortunate individual at all, all her thoughts being

centred in the reward and promotion awaiting her husband upon successfully proving his case.

It was Mrs Burton, then, who had enabled her husband to identify Mrs Musgrave as the lady who had been the murderer's agent in luring the poor governess to the place where she received her death-blow.

Cracroft, with warrants for the arrest of Musgrave and his wife, was already on his way to Merville. The captain of the steamer had been telegraphed to by the owners—at the request of the authorities—to await a messenger carrying despatches for the Governor-General of Canada. Of course the 'messenger' was the officer with the warrants. Unless Musgrave and his wife gave evidence for the Crown, they would be put in the dock as accessories.

'Of course they will give evidence, to save themselves,' said Holmes, with an oppressive consciousness of the startling revelations that would be made. It would be awkward for himself if Musgrave made known the fact that he had been the depository of this fatal information and had kept silence; but he cared little for this—he felt himself beginning to care little about anything now.

Yet, as the relation proceeded of the singular manner in which Mrs Burton's quick intelligence was enabled to make the important discovery, Holmes was startled, twice, with the force of an electric shock, and a transformation scene passed before his mind which literally dumfounded him with astonishment.

An open church door on a week-day was an attraction which Mrs Burton never resisted unless pressed for time. Two or three minutes sufficed for her purpose. One morning, on her way from the Charing Cross District Railway, she was passing St Martin's-le-Grand, and seeing the door open, went up the steps with Nellie, and remained a few minutes inside, near the door. She noticed a lady and gentleman sitting further up, as if waiting for something or somebody. There was no other person in the church. The child stumbled when Mrs Burton was about to leave, and the sound attracting their attention, the parties glanced round, whispered together a moment, and then the gentleman made a sign to Mrs Burton and walked down to her. He told her that the lady and he were going to be married—they were entire strangers in London—he showed her the license—and would she oblige them by witnessing the ceremony? The lady came along while he was speaking, and when she joined in the request, Mrs Burton consented. The marriage ceremony is dear to the female heart, and it is woman's first duty to aid and abet on every occasion. Besides, the bride was very beautiful, and altogether the whole proceeding was profoundly interesting. The marriage took place, and the names the contracting parties signed in the register were 'John Henry Musgrave'—described as widower—and 'Lucy Morelli,' described as spinster. The gentleman signed nervously; the lady—contrary to rule—quite the reverse.

Thanking Mrs Burton, they walked out of the church, and proceeded together down the street and went into the *Grand Hotel*. Mrs Burton's interest in the parties at whose marriage she had just officiated could not be expected to sub-

side all at once; the great need of the moment was some friend to discourse with on the subject. She remembered one, who was a housemaid in that hotel, and whom she had not seen for some months. Having called and found her, she invited her to tea in the evening; and it happening to be another housemaid's evening out, this lady also—being a friend of the former—was included in the invitation.

Burton did not come home to tea that evening, which made the affair the more enjoyable, the best of men being deficient of sympathy in such a matter. The information that Mr and Mrs Musgrave had been married that morning was a considerable shock to the two ladies from the *Grand Hotel*, and was outside the pale of comment; until the date of their arrival at the hotel was recalled, proving that they had stayed there to fulfil the requirements of the law as to residence before they could obtain a license. The fact that they had left London that very day, soon after the marriage, was corroborative of the foregoing supposition, and it was a considerable surprise both to Mrs Burton and her friend's friend, who was a Miss Browning. But this young woman based her surprise on very noticeable grounds. Granting—as seemed to have been clearly the case—that they were waiting to complete the condition of residence before they could be married, it followed that their one object in staying in London was to be married. This being so, what had Mrs Musgrave's motive been for looking for lodgings in another part of London? It was suggested that they might have intended removing to lodgings, as being cheaper and more private, after their marriage; but against this was the fact that they had lost no time in quitting London altogether. But was it certain that Mrs Musgrave had been doing this? Miss Browning was in possession of undoubted proof of the fact. Her mother rented a house in Mount Street, and let it out in apartments; and the daughter happened to be there the morning Mrs Musgrave called to look at the rooms, and recognised her. They were the rooms which Mr Faune had occupied; and when he had been absent a week, and seeing that he was behind with the rent, Mrs Browning, sensible of losing money, tentatively put a card in the window. The lady saw the card, and called to look at the rooms. It was here suggested that it might have been curiosity to see the rooms in which the accused murderer had lived. The answer was that this was impossible, as it was later in the same day when the news of Faune's arrest became known. Besides, Mrs Musgrave merely walked into the bed-chamber and sitting-room, and remarking that they were too small, went away again. After that, nobody had access to the rooms until the police took possession of all Mr Faune's things and removed them. The maid remembered making the reflection that evening, when the news of Mr Faune's arrest was in everybody's hands, how glad Mrs Musgrave must have felt for not taking the apartments.

All this made an interesting tea; but the practical aspect of the information presented itself later. It was eleven o'clock when Burton came home that evening, and before going to

sleep, he confided to his wife the state of the case regarding the newspaper advertisement, exactly as Cracroft had related it to Holmes. Mrs Burton's reasoning powers not being great, she could make nothing of the problem, and fell asleep. But soon after she awoke in the morning, the matter—as one closely identified with domestic interests—was in her powerful mind again, with the result that she suddenly opened her blue eyes very wide, and administered to her husband's side an application of her elbow which instantly roused him from his slumbers. On demanding what she meant, she informed him that it might be worth his while to have a look at Mrs Musgrave's handwriting in the marriage register.

'What reason had you, Mrs Burton,' Holmes inquired at this point, 'for suspecting Mrs Musgrave?'

'Bless you, Mr Holmes,' said Burton, laughing, 'she had no reason at all! She jumped at it, which is a woman's way; and, what is more,' he added, 'she jumped straight too, for we didn't have to look twice at the signature "Lucy Morelli" to be certain that that was the identical handwriting we wanted.'

'Poor creature,' said Holmes; 'what a pity!'

'But I don't suppose,' observed Burton, 'that if they give their evidence freely, it will matter much to them.'

Holmes made no reply, but resting his elbows on his knees, was buried in thought for several minutes. Then he asked Burton if he had ever seen the register of the marriage of Julius Vernon and Margaret Neale.

'Certainly. We had it photographed. Here is a copy.'

He produced the paper from a pocket-book, and Holmes perused it attentively. There were the signatures of 'Julius Vernon' (sprawled and splashed, as already described), 'Margaret Neale'; 'J. O. Spiller' and 'C. Smith' being witnesses. He remembered what Musgrave had told him of his signing the register as 'J. O. Spiller,' and he examined this signature with close interest. He could have sworn, now, that Musgrave never wrote that signature.

'Well, Burton,' he said, standing up and drawing a deep breath, 'an extraordinary development of your case is coming on, I believe. Will you let me know as soon as Musgrave and his wife have been arrested? You will hear early to-morrow. I will be at my rooms till one o'clock.'

Burton promised to let him know immediately the arrests were telegraphed by Cracroft.

'Thanks, Burton. Come round to me yourself if you can, and I may tell you something that will startle you.' Then he went away, leaving them puzzled as to his meaning.

On his way back to his lodgings he called at Cadogan Place to inquire how Mary Clayton was.

'She is quieter now,' Mr Clayton told him, 'and has gone to her own room for the evening. —Frank,' he added earnestly, 'I am afraid this affair will kill her. If she had killed that girl with her own hand, she could hardly be worse. Nothing will make her see that she is quite blameless in the matter.'

Holmes knew this, but believed that there

was more; however, he was silent. 'She will be better to-morrow,' he said.

'She will never be the same child—never.'

'You must lose no time in taking her out of London, Mr Clayton. But she will soon be better.'

Mr Clayton pressed him to remain for dinner; but he pleaded several things to do, and went away. The moment he reached his rooms he sat down and wrote a letter, which he presently despatched to Mr Crudie by a commissionaire from his club. He dined, and read the newspapers up to ten o'clock, when he returned and went to bed.

At eleven o'clock next morning he was at Mr Crudie's office and saw that gentleman.

'Well, Mr Holmes, I went, as you requested, to Faune this morning, and put to him the questions you indicated. He refused to answer them.'

After a minute's thought Holmes asked: 'Could you get me an interview with him? I would rather not have to do it; but I will make him speak.'

The solicitor expressed his readiness to accompany him at once. On the way to the prison, Holmes told him all about the discovery of the advertisement and of the connection of the Musgraves with the matter. He also related Musgrave's statement to himself.

'My dear sir,' exclaimed the solicitor, aghast, 'where is the use of going further? Those people will hang him.'

'Let us see, first, the effect the news will have on your client, Mr Crudie.'

When they were introduced to the cell in which Faune was confined, pity took the edge off Frank Holmes's abhorrence of the unfortunate man. His hair was turned gray, and his eyes were almost as colourless as his face. A more helpless, apathetic look no human countenance could wear.

He started on seeing Holmes; then a tinge of shame crossed his face, after which he dropped his eyes and set his features into a look of obstinacy.

'Now, Faune,' said Holmes, losing no time, 'you have chosen to refuse any assistance to your solicitor in preparing your defence. If you suppose, however, that your proceedings have remained a mystery, you are mistaken. Musgrave has left England, and has taken with him the five thousand pounds you gave him that night in Hyde Park. He told me the whole story of his relations with you before he left. Would you care to hear it?'

Faune made a movement of interest. Holmes then related it to him in detail. The effect was exactly as he anticipated. The prisoner stood up with inflamed face and denounced the story as an infamous fabrication.

'Very well,' said Holmes quietly. 'They have been arrested, and are being brought back. Musgrave will swear all this against you; and Mr Crudie will warn you of the danger of the evidence, if you don't see it yourself. How do you propose to disprove it? Or are you content to allow the world to believe that you murdered your wife, and bribed this man with five thousand pounds to keep silence? That is how the case stands. The police have the original of your

advertisement to Musgrave making the appointment; it is known you gave him the cheque, because he paid it in to his account in a bank.'

'How can I disprove anything he likes to swear? I have no witnesses.'

'You can answer any question your solicitor puts to you; he will make the best use of such light as you give him. At present, all he requires of you is to task your memory as to that meeting with Musgrave in the Park.'

'There is no need to task my memory; I remember it well.'

'Where did you meet him?'

'Near the small gate facing South Street—a little to the south side of it. He was there before me; he had been dining somewhere, he said, Oxford Street way. We were not five minutes together.'

'Which way did he go away?'

'Towards Hyde Park Corner. I went on the other way as far as the Marble Arch, and back to the same place, keeping the walk just inside the railings.'

'Is it true you left the Park by Grosvenor Gate?'

'Quite true. I thought it was later, and never thought of the gate at Mount Street being open.'

'While you were with Musgrave did no person pass near you, either in the Park or outside in the street?'

'No, except a woman, outside the railings, who was walking quickly towards Oxford Street. I should not have noticed her, only that she stopped for an instant, and something in her figure or attitude gave Musgrave a start. Then she hurried on, and he laughed, explaining that at first glance he fancied it was his wife, whom he had left at the hotel in bed.'

'You did not see him again?'

'I did not, except once; this was next evening.'

'Sunday evening?' said Holmes with some surprise.

'Yes, when I was going to dinner,' was the answer.

But it was evident that, for some extraordinary reason, Faune would not go beyond this. He would not say what passed between them on this occasion, but admitted that he started immediately for Dover. Why had he taken no luggage with him? He replied, for want of time to go back, and because Musgrave promised to send it next day. He further declared that he was absolutely ignorant of the murder until he was arrested for it. As to the money, he would only say that he owed Musgrave about one-fourth of the amount of the cheque, which it was vitally necessary for him to pay that night—there was an acceptance due; this was all.

But here Crudie took him by surprise. 'Whose name was to that acceptance? Out with it, man; we know it was forged.'

'Very well; it was Mr Clayton's,' he answered, reddening and dropping his eyes. 'Now you know why I had to find the money; I was completely in his power.'

'Did he hand you the acceptance in exchange for the cheque?'

'No; not until he should be satisfied about the cheque going through all right; he kept both.'

With regard to the mode of making the appointment—through the newspaper—Faune's account, when questioned, corresponded with that given by Musgrave. He said he had never seen Musgrave's wife. He refused to state the reason of his leaving London—refused in such a way as to show that on this point nothing should be got from him.

Then they came away. Mr Crudie was puzzled as to the object Holmes had before him in this interview; but his curiosity was not satisfied until they were back in the privacy of his own office.

'Mr Crudie,' he said to the astonished lawyer, 'if there is anything clear to my mind under the sun, it is the mystery of "Julius Vernon." Musgrave is the man!'

MASTER AND SERVANT AS THEY WERE.

'It is a far cry to Loch Awe;' and from the day when Harold conquered at Stamford Bridge to our own time is a long interval, and the difference between the position of the *théow* and *esne* of Anglo-Saxon chroniclers and that of the gentleman's gentleman of to-day is undoubtedly great. But as the gulf of time may soon be bridged over, so the change in the relationship between master and servant in the two periods may quickly be traced.

In Anglo-Saxon days, servants were undoubtedly treated very badly. There was perhaps something pleasant in the character of a pre-feudal household which deprived domestic servitude of some of its worst features. To the present generation the custom of high and low, young and old, sitting round the long oaken table at meals may serve to conjure up a pleasing picture; and the fashion of all parties gathering round the fire on winter evenings, carolling songs and going into ecstasies of laughter at the wit of the minstrel or the drollery of the juggler, may serve as an illustration in favour of the 'good old times.' But the fact that servants very often ran away in spite of the brutal penalties that awaited a recaptured deserter, proves that the condition of the retainers was not all that our fancy paints it. In feudal times, when the position and security of a man of rank depended upon the extent of his household, servants were in no better a position. Every groom and footboy was converted into a soldier, and until private warfare grew obsolete, every man was liable to be called upon to fight. As to the lowest class of serfs, they took rank with the oxen and the swine which they tended, and could be sold with the land upon which they worked. Like many other great changes, serfdom died out by degrees, and it was not extinguished in England for a great many years. Hume, indeed, says that some instances of bondage may be traced to the reign of Elizabeth. In Scotland, serfdom existed among colliers and salters down to nearly the end of last century.

In the time of Shakespeare domestic service was in a state of transition: the old system was decaying, the new one springing into life; and if one may be allowed to judge from casual

references scattered throughout the plays of the poet, the new order does not appear to have been altogether satisfactory. In *King Lear*—to take one example—Kent denounces Oswald, the steward, as a 'knaave, a rascal, an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, worsted-stocking knave!' From Shakespeare's plays it further appears that the servants of the period were companions and confidants of their master, and that they were generally sly and pilfering, and players of practical jokes. In great families it was customary for servants to take an oath of fidelity on their entrance into office. Posthumus alludes to the usage when he says of Imogene's servants:

Her attendants are
All sworn and honourable.

The condition of servants at this period was therefore peculiar, and it is clear that they were ruled by a curious mixture of stern discipline and great laxity. One mode of enforcing obedience was by imposing forfeits or fines, some of which are enumerated by Sir J. Harrington in his *Nugæ Antiquæ*. For being absent from prayers, for uttering an oath, for leaving a door open, or 'for any follower visiting the cook,' a fine was inflicted; while in another set of rules it is provided that

If any one this rule doth break,
And cut more bread than he can eat,
Shall to the box one penny pay.

In case an offender should refuse to pay 'direct without resistance,' provision is made at the conclusion that

Each one here shall be assistance,
And he that doth refuse to aid
By him one penny shall be paid.

Of the many old rules of this kind still in existence, perhaps the most interesting are those at Windsor Castle. These, according to an inscription at the top of them, were found 'in the study of King Charles I. of Blessed Memory.'

In addition to fines, masters and mistresses had power to chastise refractory servants, as is evident from references in Acts of Parliament. A statute of Henry VIII., entitled, 'An Act for Murder and Malicious Bloodshed within the Court,' provides 'that this Act shall not in anywise extend or be prejudicial or hurtful to any nobleman or to any other person or persons that shall happen to strike his or their servants within the said Palace . . . with his or their hands or fist, or with any small staff or stick for correction and punishment of any offences committed and done or to be committed and done;' although an exception is made provided the persons stricken should die within one year after the stroke. A statute belonging to the reign of James I. provides that the Act shall not extend to any person who, in chastising or correcting his child or servant, shall beside his intent and purpose 'chance to commit manslaughter.' Apparently, however, there was some limit to this privilege, for at a Court Baron of the manor of Hendon, held in the time of Henry VIII., E. Rogers was prosecuted for an assault by him on his man-servant, and was fined twenty pence. Where the line was drawn it is difficult to under-

stand. From an allusion in Tusser's *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry*, we gather that the sluggard, also, was regarded upon occasion as a suitable subject for corporal punishment.

In a long and somewhat amusing treatise in William Gouge's *Whole Armour of God*, published in 1627, the correction of servants for trivial offences is justified by scriptural references. It is clear, moreover, that the servants of the time bargained for and expected to be beaten, and took their punishment in good part and without any sense of degradation.

The characteristics of the domestic of this period may be briefly summed up by saying that although he was full of tricks, he was less treacherous than his predecessors, and was quite willing to fight valiantly on behalf of his master. In the days of Addison and Steele—to pass on to a later period—the gentleman's gentleman, and still more the liveried domestic of whom Johnson discoursed, might not have been quite so trusty a retainer as the stubborn blue-coat of Elizabeth; but he was, as has been well pointed out, more prone to use his inventive faculties for his master than against him.

Before this time, however, great changes had taken place in the relations between employer and employed. The first Act of Parliament for regulating servants' wages was passed so early as the year 1351, a proceeding consequent upon the great plague of 1347–49, by which labour was rendered scarce. Two years previously, an Act had been passed providing that all able-bodied persons having no evident means of subsistence should offer themselves as labourers to any that would hire them. From these two Acts, therefore, sprang the custom of justices meeting once a year to regulate wages, and also the establishment of the hiring fairs or 'mops,' which are still common in some parts of England, and of which there is a representation in Isaac Bickerstaff's *Love in a Village*. It should be noted, however, that whether the origin of labourers standing for hire is due to the Act of 1349 is open to question. In ancient Rome there were particular spots in which servants plied for hire; and the establishment of such a custom in England is noteworthy, as showing the demand for labour. Although the position of servants at this period was by no means one of independence, yet very soon there arose a conflict between master and servant, which slowly waxed fiercer and fiercer, and eventually led to a loud outcry that the servant was the master and the master was the servant.

The notion that domestic service is degrading came in, it is stated, with the Revolution of 1688. It is certain at anyrate that before the civil wars ladies of rank usually had for their attendants persons of gentle blood; and if the gentlemen were not so fortunate, we have abundant evidence that they had about them servants whose long service and unswerving fidelity merit the highest admiration. There are in various parts of the country memorials to descendants of the faithful Adam in *As you like It*, bearing witness to the fact that no inconsiderable number of those so immortalised remained in one family quite as long as he who offered to accompany Orlando in his flight. In 1826 was published 'A Collection of Memorials Inscribed to the Memory of good and faithful Servants throughout the Counties of

Berks, Derby, Essex, Gloucester, York,' &c.; and to this the curious reader is referred for many touching inscriptions. The terms of servitude, however, grew shorter in each succeeding generation, and gradually there set in a reaction against the old order. In noting this fact the wits were not slow, nor did they fail, to ridicule the aspirations, the dress, and the language of their domestics. Passing over the times of Addison and Steele, we find, in 1733, an anonymous writer, after noting that women are so scarce that 'from thirty to forty shillings a year their wages are increased of late to six, seven, and eight pounds per annum,' complaining somewhat bitterly that they are 'puffed up with pride nowadays,' and regretting that 'it is hard enough to know the mistress from the maid by her dress.' Garrick, in *High Life Below Stairs*, and many others, also ridiculed the aspirations of the domestic of the period.

Thirty years later than that in which the 'indignant correspondent' wrote—namely, in 1760—steps were taken to put an end to a custom which had obtained for a long time. When Pope decided that he could not afford to dine with the Duke of Montagu because each dinner involved a disbursement of five guineas to the servants of Montagu House, the Duke sent with his subsequent invitation to the poet an order for the amount in question. Thus the difficulty attending 'vails' or tips was overcome in this instance. To avoid paying them was impossible; and indeed a writer in *The World*—famous for its contributions from Lord Chesterfield—hints that a certain noble Lord, by connivance with his servants, really compelled his guests to defray the cost of the entertainment afforded them! At length, however, it was decided to put a stop to this system of extortion, and at a meeting of gentlemen in Scotland in the year 1760, it was resolved that in visiting one another they would give no money to servants, nor allow their own domestics to take any money from their guests. A few days later, the Honourable Company of Scots Hunters, at their meeting held in Edinburgh, came to a similar determination, although one noble lord vigorously opposed the proposition and threatened to knock down the first servant who refused to accept a gratuity. The servants themselves naturally looked upon the movement with disfavour; and in 1764, certain gentlemen who had resisted the payment of vails were attacked in Ranelagh Gardens by an angry mob of footmen. Even at this period there was some form of punishment for refractory servants, for it is frequently recorded that a favourite mode of checking the outbursts of disobedient footmen was the pressgang, which was held out as a dreadful punishment, like a rod to a child.

To trace the growth of liberty among servants after this period is unnecessary. As in every other trade or profession, wages gradually increased, and imperceptibly yet decisively the relations between employer and employed changed until they became what they are at present. Whether the great changes that have taken place in domestic service during the last two centuries have destroyed the faithful relations which have existed, and should exist, between master and man, is perhaps open to question. Although the terms of servitude are now of shorter duration, and although the new order has necessarily

become imbued with the spirit of the times, yet between the two classes there is, as a rule, no lack of that devotion which has formed a subject for praise by writers of all ages.

MY AUNT'S COCKATOO.

My Aunt Matilda at the time of her death was a good bit over seventy years of age. As long as I can remember she had been the same in appearance—a staid old lady, somewhat diminutive in height, and decidedly of what Scotch people call a ‘perjink’ manner and appearance. From year to year she scarcely ever varied her style of dress in the slightest particular, and rigidly adhered to the same mode of doing her hair as it had been done in the days of her youth. This consisted of bringing her somewhat scanty locks low down over the forehead, and culminated in a ‘corkscrew’ ringlet dangling at each cheek, which she often assured me was without doubt the only sensible style of coiffure, and in her early days had been allowed to be specially adapted to her cast of features, and was considered ‘most killing.’ Whatever my own opinion, it was my interest to agree; so I never disputed her contention. I may as well admit at once that I had very good reasons for keeping on the best of terms with my aunt. She was possessed of considerable means, spent little or nothing, and, with the exception of my cousin Bob Steele, had no living relation but myself.

My aunt had never been married—not for want of offers, she frequently informed me—detested children, and seemed to centre all her love and affection on an ancient white cockatoo, which had been in her possession for I do not know the number of years, and was possibly as old as herself. She positively doted on the bird; but there was no cause for jealousy on my part, as she could hardly leave her money to her pet, and that was the main thing. At the same time, I never could abide the creature. It neither spoke nor whistled, and with the exception of now and then indulging in a most unearthly ‘squawk,’ was totally devoid of vocal accomplishments. In Aunt Matilda’s eyes, however, it was a paragon of sense and cleverness. There was no bird in the wide world like ‘dear Cockie;’ and to have hinted at the contrary would have been rank heresy, and demolished all my hopes of a favourable mention in her last will and testament. In truth, I once, when a lad, had a narrow escape from such a fate. Even then I hated the creature, and never missed a chance of tormenting it when I could do so without fear of discovery. One day, however, I was fairly caught—caught, in fact, in a double sense. While indulging in some sly digs at the cockatoo, he suddenly made a grab at my hand and took a piece clean out of one of my fingers. My frantic yells at once brought my aunt upon the scene, and I had to confess I had been taking unwarrantable liberties with her favourite. Of course I caught it hot. No anxiety was shown

for me or my lacerated finger; all my aunt’s endearments were reserved for her pet, and grave fears expressed lest he should have swallowed the piece and it might disagree with him. ‘You know,’ she remarked in a serious tone, ‘you know, Ebenezer, he has never been accustomed to eating raw meat!’

It took some time to reinstate me in Aunt Matilda’s good graces; but from that day I had an almost uncontrollable inclination to wring that bird’s neck.

Some years after this unfortunate episode, I really thought we had seen the last of my *bête noire*. One fine morning he somehow or other managed to get free, and the window being open, he unceremoniously took his departure. Aunt Matilda was in despair, and I was at once sent for. I found her in a terrible state, perfectly prostrate with agitation and grief. Men were despatched in all directions, advertisements inserted in the newspapers, and no money or pains spared to effect the recovery of the absconding cockatoo. In my heart I fervently prayed the bird would never be found alive again, but was constrained by circumstances to exhibit an appearance of anxiety and diligence in the search which I certainly did not feel. As luck would have it, however, after an absence of three days the truant was ignominiously brought home in a soot-bag, having been discovered by a chimney-sweep in a disused flue. Into this he had either fallen, or had taken refuge in it from the inclemency of the weather. He was in a filthy and rather emaciated condition, and it was only after a thorough washing that my aunt was able to recognise her ‘dear Cockie.’ Her joy at his recovery was excessive, and even I came in for a share of thanks, amid the general rejoicing, for my praiseworthy exertions! From that time my aunt seemed to regard me with altered feelings; and my hopes rose high as one day she informed me, in confidence, that she was going to make her will and would ‘not forget’ me.

Meantime, the cockatoo’s cage had been found to be defective, and a new one was specially constructed for him. It was made according to his mistress’s directions, extra precautions being taken to prevent a second escape. Not content with this, a silver ring or collar was also procured with her name and address engraved upon it. This, after a good deal of expostulation on the part of the bird, was securely fixed round his neck, much to his disgust. He spent several days in fruitless efforts to claw it off with his feet; but in time got used to it, and his feathers growing over it, it was scarcely noticeable to a casual observer.

My cousin Bob Steele and I often met at Aunt Matilda’s, and to all appearance were on thoroughly friendly terms, as cousins ought to be. Somehow or other, however, Bob and I were never very intimate; and when we left our aunt’s, we generally parted at the first corner. No doubt, Bob had ‘expectations’ like myself, and there may have been a little feeling of rivalry between us; but after my aunt’s confidential reference to her settlement, I felt I could afford to look with complacency on his desperate endeavours to ‘keep sweet’ with the old lady.

So things went on until my aunt's death occurred—somewhat unexpectedly in the end—and Bob and I were called upon to pay our last respects to her memory. To say that I was inconsolable would be an exaggeration. I certainly respected her; but at the same time I felt that the extent to which I was likely to profit in a pecuniary sense would go a long way to assuage my grief. I was in receipt of a very small salary at the time, and any decent sum would be a welcome addition to my annual income. After the funeral—at which Bob Steele and I officiated as chief mourners—my aunt's man of business produced her will, and at once made us aware of its contents. That document was, from my point of view, an extraordinary and at the same time most unsatisfactory one. In the first place she left me her house and furniture. (This was all right, and just what I had expected.) In the second place she bequeathed the sum of two thousand pounds to Bob Steele. (This was *not* so satisfactory; but of course I could make no objection.) Next, with many injunctions as to proper diet and treatment, she gave to me her 'dear white cockatoo, his cage and contents.' (This was a legacy I would willingly have passed over to Cousin Bob, and one which I did not at all appreciate.) Then came the climax. The residue of her estate, consisting of some three to four thousand pounds invested in Bank stock, was to remain so invested, and the annual income therefrom was to be paid to me so long as the cockatoo lived! At his death, the stock was to be realised, and the proceeds divided equally between Bob Steele and myself.

To say that I was disappointed would be putting the case rather mildly. Here was I saddled with the custody of a creature I detested, and my income dependent on my care of the wretched bird. This was my aunt's idea of 'not forgetting' me. As for Bob Steele, he was infinitely better off than I was. Not only had he a substantial sum at once, but he also participated to the same extent as I did at the ultimate division. No doubt my immediate income was much better than his; but who could say how long it might continue? The whole affair was obviously a clever plan of my Aunt Matilda's to ensure her favourite's being well looked after. Of course my interest would be to keep the bird as long alive as possible, and I tried to console my wounded feelings with the knowledge that cockatoos frequently lived to a great age. I inwardly vowed that nothing on my part would be wanting to keep Cousin Bob out of his share of the residue as long as possible. From the look on his face I could very well see the latter was enjoying my ill-concealed disappointment. He, doubtless knowing the bird to be very old, expected he would soon receive his legacy, which would put him in a much better position than I would be. On one point, however, he was disappointed, and said so openly: this was about the total amount of our aunt's estate. I agreed with him in this, having always considered her to be worth about as much again as her will showed. There was, however, nothing to do but accept the inevitable, and the testator's instructions were carried out with the least possible delay. I immediately took possession of

my aunt's residence, and devoted myself with as good a grace as possible to the care of the cockatoo.

For some time after this I saw little of Bob Steele. We occasionally met in the street; but a rather stiff nod was all the recognition that passed between us. Then I heard he had got married and had given up his situation and taken to speculating on the Stock Exchange. Rumour said his life was not a particularly happy one. His wife was somewhat extravagant, and spent his money freely. Meantime, with my salary and my annual income under my aunt's will, I lived very comfortably. At the same time there was something unpleasant in the thought that my position depended on the life of a wretched old cockatoo. The latter, however, continued in a most lively state of health, and to all appearance seemed likely to last my time. No effort on my part was wanting to assist him in becoming a veritable Methuselah of the parrot tribe.

My aunt died in February; and one evening in the following December I was surprised to receive a visit from my cousin, Bob Steele. He looked rather dejected, and for some time did not inform me of the object of his visit. He talked on things in general; but although he must have seen the cockatoo's cage standing on a side-table, he never once referred to it. We had a bit of supper, and were enjoying a quiet pipe afterwards, when at last he blurted out his reason for calling. It was simply this—his speculations had not turned out as he anticipated; he was in immediate need of four hundred pounds, and wished me to put my name to a bill for that amount.

This, I thought, was rather cheeky on his part, and I had little difficulty in giving him a point-blank refusal. He talked and implored for some time longer, declared he would be ruined, &c.; but at last, seeing me perfectly obdurate, he gave it up and rose to depart. I accompanied him down-stairs, and was assisting him on with his overcoat, when he suddenly remembered he had left his pipe in the sitting-room. He at once ran up-stairs for it, leaving me standing in the hall holding his overcoat. In a few minutes he returned, said good-night in a somewhat curt manner, and took his leave. I felt honestly I was justified in refusing his request. In all probability he would have failed to meet the bill when it came due, and I would have had to retire it, which would have deprived me of any little savings I had. Besides, he had got a good sum in cash by my aunt's will, whilst I at present had not received one penny of principal. I accordingly went to bed that night with a clear conscience. Before doing so, however, I had my usual look at my charge, who was all right, and sound asleep on his perch.

Next morning when I awoke I heard the cockatoo squawking away in his usual vociferous style. Whilst I was at breakfast, my house-keeper, as was her daily custom, removed the cage to give it its regular clean out, at the same time giving the bird a fresh supply of food and water. I then went to business, and returned home at my usual hour—half-past four. Imagine my consternation on being met with the astounding information that the cockatoo was dead! I

was simply thunder-struck. Here was an end to my annuity at a moment when I was never dreaming of such an occurrence. I found the bird lying perfectly stiff at the bottom of the cage, just as my housekeeper had discovered him about an hour previously. What could have been wrong with him? He seemed all right when I left in the morning. Suddenly the fact of Bob Steele's unexpected call and my refusal of his request flashed across my brain. Was it possible he could have had anything to do with the misfortune? Still, I did not see how he could have accomplished any sinister design with me in the room all the evening. My head was in a whirl, and it was only that evening, whilst I lay thinking in bed, that I remembered his return to the sitting-room for his pipe, when he was for a couple of minutes or so alone with the bird. I at once concluded Steele had poisoned him in revenge for my refusal, and to get his share of the residue of our aunt's money without delay.

I was indignant at his treachery, and resolved I would have the bird carefully examined; and should my suspicions prove correct, would make Bob suffer for it. Unluckily, as I mentioned, the cage had been cleaned and the food and water renewed; so I could not get that analysed; but next morning I placed the dead cockatoo in the hands of a competent person for investigation. I then, as in duty bound, went and informed the lawyer of my loss. He sympathised with me, but of course could only proceed to carry out my aunt's behests and divide the money between Bob Steele and myself.

Meantime I waited somewhat impatiently for the result of Cockie's post-mortem. In a few days I received the report. Distinct traces of arsenic were found in the bird's stomach, and seemed to have been administered in the form of poisoned wheat, a favourite species of vermin-killer.

I immediately consulted my legal adviser; but he was afraid I could have no case against Steele. We both were satisfied in our own minds as to his having put the poisoned grain amongst the bird's food, but we had no way of proving it. I also found, on inquiry, that there was actually a box of this same vermin-killer in my own house, which my housekeeper—seeing I would not permit of a cat being kept, for the sake of the cockatoo—used for destroying mice. The lawyer suggested that the woman, who was not aware of the terms of my legacy, might have herself wished to get rid of a disagreeable charge; but nothing could free me from the opinion that my cousin Bob was the culprit.

I had a note the next day from the analyst asking what I wished done with the dead bird, and inquiring if he would send it to a bird-stuffer's. I answered at once that he could pitch it out. However valuable the bird was to me alive, it was no use dead, and I never wished to cast eyes on the creature again. As for spending any money on stuffing it—no, thank you! 'Master Cockie' had been a nuisance to me all my life, and now he was gone, I was not going to cry over him, however much I might mourn my lost annuity. The defunct bird's cage was at once removed from my sight, and I made up my mind to make the best of a bad job.

A post or two afterwards I received a small packet. On opening it I found it contained the bird's silver collar, which I had forgotten all about. There was also a note from the analyst saying he had, as desired, put away the dead bird, but thought it right to send me the collar, which being silver was of some little value, and might be interesting as a memento of an old pet! Pet, indeed! Poor man! he little knew my feelings towards 'the deceased.' However, the ring was silver and would realise a few shillings; so I replied, thanking him for it. As for the collar itself, I scarcely looked at it; indeed, I never took it out of the tissue paper in which it was wrapped, but unceremoniously pitched it into a drawer in my desk amongst some other odds and ends.

Some months afterwards, whilst looking through my desk for something or other, I came across the packet. At first I did not remember what it was, and it was only when I opened it out I discovered the cockatoo's silver collar. I did not replace it, however, thinking I might as well get quit of an article which called up no remembrances of a pleasing nature. That evening, as I was sitting in a meditative mood over the fire, I, without thinking, took up the ring and began turning it round in my fingers. The first thing that caught my eye was my aunt's name and address engraved round the outside. Then, just as I was on the point of laying it aside, I observed something scratched on the inside. This at once interested me; and on a closer and more careful examination, I made out the following words: 'To E. R.' These were my initials. 'Apply to North British Bank.—M. B.' These latter were my aunt's initials.

Here was a mystery. The words were roughly scratched with some sharp instrument, and evidently by my aunt herself. 'Apply to North British Bank.' Certainly I would. The message was without doubt intended for me; but what the result of it would be I had no idea.

Next forenoon found me in the private room of the manager of the London branch of the North British Bank. I told my story. He at once turned to the bank ledger, and, much to my amazement, informed me that there was a sum of five thousand pounds standing to my credit! On further inquiry I found this sum had been paid in by my aunt some two years previously, with instructions that it should lie until applied for by me personally.

Her seeming unfair treatment of me was now explained. She knew that so long as the cockatoo lived I would be pretty comfortable with my annual allowance, while the fear of losing it made me pay due regard to the comfort and well-being of her favourite. At the same time, when the bird did die she made certain I would be none the worse. Dear old lady! I do not believe I ever thought so well of her as I did at that moment. As for Bob Steele, all my animosity was fled. Instead of punishing him for killing the cockatoo—which I still believe he did—why, I blessed him for the deed. Goodness knows how long the wretched bird might have lived, and now, instead of losing by its untimely decease, I would benefit to a considerable degree. It was only another proof of the old saying, that blessings often come in disguise. Certainly, I

did not in my wildest moments ever conjecture it possible I could benefit in the smallest degree by the death of that bane of my existence, 'My Aunt's Cockatoo.'

THE NEW RIVER COMPANY.

AN 'ADVENTURER'S SHARE.'

FROM time to time one sees in the newspaper an announcement to the effect that the fractional part of an 'Adventurer's Share,' or a 'King's Share,' as the case may be, in the New River Company has been put up to auction and sold for a sum which, without exaggeration, may be considered a handsome fortune. Comparatively few persons perhaps know of the origin of these peculiar classes of shares, and a short sketch of their history may therefore prove of interest.

The New River Company, the first and most successful company of its kind, was founded nearly three centuries ago by a Mr Hugh Middleton, a City man of some wealth and repute. During the reigns of Elizabeth and James, various schemes seem to have been projected for supplying the London metropolis with water; but it was not until the year 1609 that anything decisive was done in the matter, when, at the invitation of Mr Middleton, the Court of Common Council transferred the powers they had obtained from parliament to that gentleman, who at once began what was at that time considered a gigantic work. The object in view was to connect certain springs at Chadwell and Amwell, in Hertfordshire, with the metropolis—a distance of some twenty miles; but, owing to the many hills and valleys, nearly double that distance had to be taken for the course.

From the outset the work appears to have been beset with difficulties, on account of the opposition of certain interested landowners, whose action compelled Mr Middleton to ask the corporation for an extension of time in which to complete the undertaking. This having been granted, his next difficulty was the want of funds, the great expense he had already incurred having considerably impoverished him, which obliged him to ask the corporation for financial help; but meeting with a refusal on their part to embark in what they considered a hazardous enterprise, an application, with better success, was made to King James I. The king, it is recorded, in consideration of his having an interest in half the concern, agreed to bear half the expense of the whole work. The shares created were seventy-two in number; thirty-six thus came into the king's possession, and were designated 'King's Shares.'

With the king's support the work proceeded without interruption; the year 1618 witnessing its completion, by which time, however, its originator had been compelled to part with the whole of his thirty-six shares to various persons, such shares being termed 'Adventurers' Shares.'

Although this public-spirited benefactor suffered great losses from his enterprise, it is satisfactory to learn that a few years later he received the honour of knighthood, besides being held in much esteem by the public for his plucky conduct in undertaking a work of such magnitude, and that, after his death, a tribute was paid to his memory by an Urn being placed on a pedestal, on a small island near Chadwell, with

an inscription as follows: 'Sacred to the Memory of SIR HUGH MIDDLETON, BART., whose successful Care, assisted by the Patronage of his King, conveyed this Stream to London. An Immortal Work, since Man cannot more nearly imitate the Deity than in bestowing Health.'

Up to the time of the date of the company's charter—the year 1619—the work is said to have cost upwards of half a million of money; and until the year 1633, no dividend appears to have been paid on the shares. In fact, so unpromising was the aspect at that period of the company's affairs, that Charles I. re-granted to the heirs of Sir Hugh the whole of the thirty-six shares possessed by the Crown on condition that a yearly rent of five hundred pounds was paid to the Crown. Thus it will be seen how the general public became possessed of these shares.

It may be of interest to note here that the holder of a King's share is excluded from having any part in the management of the concern, its founder, in order to prevent the direction of its affairs from falling into the hands of courtiers, having stipulated with King James that His Majesty should take no part in the management. Thus these shares are slightly less valuable than those of the 'Adventurers,' which give the holders a seat on the direction. Both classes of shares have by alienation become divided into fractional parts, which in regard to the Adventurers' shares necessitated an application being made, in the year 1711, to the Lord Chancellor to determine how the holders of these fractional shares were to be represented on the Board. The problem was solved by a decree to the effect that the possessors of two or more fractional parts of a share were empowered to jointly nominate one of their number for election to the Board.

To give an idea of the enormous value to which these shares have risen, it may be stated that in the year 1800 one was sold for £14,000; in 1811 the price obtained was £17,000; in 1878, £93,000; and at the close of last year, the eighth part of a share sold for a sum at the enormous rate of £100,000 per share, an amount which in years to come is not unlikely to be exceeded, owing to the reversions of a large property which will accrue to the company, and so still further enhance the value of these historical securities.

SPRING.

CHEERLESS the day and wintry, gray and chill;
No gleam of sun; no breath of balmy air;
Within the woods the trees stand gaunt and bare,
Around them Winter's desolation still;
But yet, within those bare and leafless trees,
Though all unseen, do hidden life-germs lurk,
Astir, each hour, in silent ceaseless work;
And on the chilly wind there faintly breathes
A whisper of bright days to come ere long,
When wood and field in beauty shall be clad,
And rich and full shall rise the joyous song
Of birds; and hope anew makes all men glad,
One balmy breath the Winter's charm to break,
And Nature from her long cold sleep will wake!

M. C. C.

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